

## A brief assessment of tourism related studies: An example of ICSER Conferences

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### **Abstract**

*Tourism has an important role in the economies of countries. By the help of the revenues earned from tourism, countries can develop easily and close their budget deficits. Moreover, the importance of tourism is increasing every passing day. Along with the increasing value of tourism, academic researches and studies have also started to gain importance. Academicians have conducted several studies related with the subtopics of tourism. Most of these studies have presented in the various platforms such as conferences, congresses and workshops. In this study, tourism related conference publications are examined in different aspects. For this purpose, conferences organized by International Center of Social Sciences & Education Research (ICSER) since 2015 were taken into consideration. In this context, proceedings published in two conferences such as International Conference on Social Sciences and Education Research (ICSSER) and International Conference on Tourism: Theory, Current Issues and Research (ICTTR) held by ICSER were examined. Conference proceedings were analyzed according to some criteria. These can be listed as the number of the tourism related proceedings according to the years, number of the authors in the proceedings, themes of the tourism related proceedings, types of the studies and samples used in the proceedings. As a conclusion, according to the proceedings being examined, it is found that interesting aspects of tourism are revealed.*

**Keywords:** *Tourism, conference proceedings, ICSSER, ICTTR*

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## 1. Introduction

In the development of countries, certain industries undertake locomotive roles. Tourism is the one of those industries. Countries which give importance to tourism could develop more easily than others. Especially the ones which have plenty of environmental beauties and historical ruins are so lucky to attract both domestic and foreign tourists. Besides, denoted features are not enough to persuade tourists to visit countries. In fact; qualified employees, following the innovations are also the keys of the success in the tourism industry. At this point, raising the awareness of tourism managers to some important points is so important. Newspapers, periodicals and academic studies are the important valuable sources for decision makers.

Along with the accelerated growth of tourism in the world, academicians have started to conduct tourism related studies in various subjects. Indeed by means of these studies, it could be easy to follow the innovations, problems, complaints and consumer behavior of tourists more consciously.

In this study, it is aimed to evaluate the tourism related conference publications based on the conferences arranged by International Center of Social Sciences & Education Research (ICSER). In this context, conferences such as International Conference on Social Sciences and Education Research (ICSSER) and International Conference on Tourism: Theory, Current Issues and Research (ICTTR) were taken into consideration. Based on this, proceedings in these two conferences were analyzed according to some criteria. Abstract of the paper was presented in ICTTR 2017- Ankara (Ilgaz Sümer, 2017).

The paper is organized as follows: tourism and tourism industry are introduced briefly. Next, methodology is explained. Further, results are presented. Finally, conclusion and suggestions are highlighted.

## 2. A brief overview on tourism and tourism industry

In the literature, it is possible to find many definitions of tourism. Some of these definitions can be listed as follows:

“Tourism is defined as all temporary visits to another region (domestic) or country (international) lasting more than 24 hours (Nagle, 1999, p. 4).”  
 “Tourism can be defined as a set of activities (for leisure, business, religious, health and personal purposes) engaged in by persons temporarily away (maximum of one year) from their usual environment, excluding the pursuit of remuneration from within the place visited or long-term change of residence (Masron, Mohamed & Marzuki, 2015, p. 21).”

“Tourism comprises the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited ([http://statistics.unwto.org/sites/all/files/pdf/unwto\\_tsa\\_1.pdf](http://statistics.unwto.org/sites/all/files/pdf/unwto_tsa_1.pdf)).

It is the fact that the word of tourism can evoke different meanings to different people. It can be possible to classify tourism according to some factors such as geography, ownership, function, industry and motive (Walker, 2006).

In general terms, tourism and tourism industry have some characteristics differentiating the industry from the others. The major characteristics of tourism and tourism industry can be expressed as in the following (Walker, 2011; Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011):

- It is composed of dynamic relationships.
- Visits in tourism are temporary.
- Tourism industry is a labor-intensive industry.
- There is a high interaction between tourism and other various industries such as transportation, lodging, and food service.
- People are the focus of the industry.
- Tourism services are high contact services.

Tourism industry which is in the first three largest economic activities in the world has been growing so fast (Furqan, Mat Som & Hussin, 2010). Moreover, because of the positive impacts on the countries tourism has a valuable place in the world. Especially, the impacts of tourism can be classified as economic, social and environmental (Zaei & Zaei, 2013). In the perspective of economic impacts, tourism incomes have an important role in the gross domestic product. In fact, tourism has a positive effect both on the regional and local economies. Besides, tourism enables

people to communicate with each other. By the help of the tourism activities, it is started to become easy to bring people of different cultures (Angeloni, 2013). Tourism also greatly impacts the natural environment both in positive and negative respects. Based on these impacts the importance of tourism can be shortly listed as:

- Enabling economic progress
- Development of infrastructure
- Societal development
- Attracting attention to cultural heritage
- Providing employment

(<https://www.quora.com/Why-is-tourism-important-for-any-country>)

### 3. Methodology

The aim of the study is to examine the tourism related conference proceedings organized by International Center of Social Sciences & Education Research (ICSER). In this context, conferences organized by ICSER since 2015 were taken into consideration. Proceedings published in two conferences such as International Conference on Social Sciences and Education Research (ICSSER) and International Conference on Tourism: Theory, Current Issues and Research (ICTTR) held by ICSER were examined. The analyses were made according to some criteria. In this study, examined conferences are:

- ✓ ICTTR 2015 Antalya
- ✓ ICSSER 2015 Antalya
- ✓ ICTTR 2016 İstanbul
- ✓ ICSSER 2016 İstanbul
- ✓ ICTTR 2017 Rome
- ✓ ICSSER 2017 Rome

### 4. Results and discussion

Proceedings that are presented in two conferences (ICSSER and ICTTR) were investigated according to some criteria. In the following, the classification criteria of proceedings and related tables are listed.

Table 1 shows the number of the tourism related proceedings according to the years. It can be seen that 24.79%, 41.88% and 33.33% of the conference proceedings organized by ICSER are related with

tourism in 2015, 2016 and 2017, respectively. It can be interpreted that the number of tourism related proceedings goes up year after year in general.

Table 1. Number of the tourism related proceedings according to the years

Conferences	n	%
ICTTR/ICSSER 2015	29	24.79
ICTTR/ICSSER 2016	49	41.88
ICTTR/ICSSER 2017	39	33.33
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 2. Number of the authors in the proceedings

Number of the authors	n	%
1	34	29.06
2	58	49.57
3	21	17.95
More than 3	4	3.42
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>100</b>

It can be seen that among the related conferences, 49.57% of the conference proceedings are published by two authors while 21.37% of them are conducted by 3 and more than 3 authors. It shows us that collaborative works are generally the most preferred ones in the proceedings, which enable to examine the subjects in a different point of view.

Table 3 indicates that types of tourism (11.11%) are the most studied theme in the proceedings. Hospitality (9.40%), gastronomic tourism (9.40%), consumer behavior (9.40%), tourism management (9.40%), technology in tourism (8.55%) are among the other most studied themes. Least studied subjects in the proceedings are ethics (0.85%), CRM (0.85%), tourism information systems (0.85%), cross-cultural studies (0.85%) and corporate social responsibility (0.85%). In recent years, since technology has an important role in tourism related activities, technology in tourism have a considerable percentage in total. On the other hand, ethics, CRM, tourism information systems, cross-cultural studies and corporate social responsibility are not studied too much even though these subjects are in the heart of tourism.

Table 3. Themes of the tourism related proceedings behavior, education, training and tourism management.

Themes of the proceedings	n	%
Tourism marketing	6	5.14
Hospitality	11	9.40
Gastronomic tourism	11	9.40
New trends in tourism	2	1.71
Consumer behavior	11	9.40
Crisis and tourism	2	1.71
Education and training	6	5.14
Ethics	1	0.85
CRM	1	0.85
Financial management	3	2.56
Tourism information systems	1	0.85
Human resources management	6	5.14
Sustainability	7	5.98
Cross-cultural studies	1	0.85
Technology in tourism	10	8.55
Types of tourism	13	11.11
Cultural heritage	2	1.71
Quality	5	4.27
Tourism management	11	9.40
Social media in tourism	4	3.42
Corporate social responsibility	1	0.85
Terrorism and tourism	2	1.71
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4. Types of the studies

Types of the studies	n	%
Practical	75	64.10
Conceptual	42	35.90
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>100</b>

According to Table 4, 64.10% of the tourism related conference proceedings are based on practical studies whereas 35.90% are conceptual. In practical studies most examined themes are hospitality, consumer

Table 5. Samples used in the proceedings

Samples	n	%
Hotel customers	13	17.33
Hotel employees	15	20
Tourists	17	22.67
Students/academic staff	12	16
Airport organizations	1	1.33
Food and beverage employees/ restaurant chefs/kitchen managers	5	6.67
Other managers/employees (Except tourism, food and beverage industry)	4	5.33
Other businesses	2	2.67
Tourist guides	1	1.33
Marina managers	1	1.33
Residents	2	2.67
Municipal employees	2	2.67
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>100</b>

In Table 5, mostly used samples in the proceedings are tourists, hotel employees and hotel customers. Selected samples are especially used to determine the tourist's behaviors. Least studied samples are encountered to be airport organizations, tourist guides and marina managers.

## 5. Conclusion and suggestions

Tourism sector has a vital importance in the economic development of the countries. Therefore, in the last years various studies have been conducted to demonstrate the importance of tourism related activities and attract people's attention to the revenues generated by these activities.

In this study, tourism related conferences held by ICSEER are used. Conferences between 2015 and 2017 (except the conference held in Ankara 2017) were examined. Proceedings were analysed by some criteria such as number of the proceedings according to years, number of the authors in the proceedings, themes of the

tourism related proceedings, types of the studies and samples used in the proceedings. In this context, 117 conference proceedings were taken into consideration. It was determined that tourism's various aspects were discussed by authors in different years. However, surprisingly it was found that some of the important subjects such as ethics, CRM, tourism information systems, cross-cultural studies and corporate social responsibility were not studied a lot. Besides, some of the subjects for instance, types of tourism, consumer behavior, and technology in tourism were under debate a lot by authors.

Although in the conference proceedings collaborative works are generally the most preferred ones, it was noticed that there are too few studies that conduct on interdisciplinary works. However, it is the truth that interdisciplinary researches enable to examine the issues in a more comprehensive and integrative manner. Furthermore, accelerating cross-cultural studies will be helpful to understand and compare the current trends in tourism sector.

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